

Brothers

Remember that winter when we were boys
and the water at Whiteside had frozen over?
Irresistible. I went first, but was barely half way
when the ice began to sweat, then crack,
and I went down into the cold.

The bottom was nothing but slippage and slime
and every shelf I tried to push up from
just shattered and melted in beside me.
Nothing felt solid until your hand did.

Ach, it was a fright, but one we walked
home from, soaked to the skin and laughing.
But now life's more than just a boys' game.

When you told me you were ill
I pictured you out in that frozen place
trying to spread the weight of your thoughts
across your mind's surface, and feeling the pull
of the darkness underneath -

Brother, let me reach out again
across the miles and the years.
Take my hand; give me yours. Hold on.